

Good Afternoon Madam Chairman, Representatives and citizens. My name is Sean Wines. FIRST, I'd like to thank you for the opportunity to speak here. My hope is that my testimony will spark in all of you a feeling within yourselves of what is right, fitting and proper, ~~and~~ I would ask you right now, to remember those words: right, fitting, and proper. I'll get back to that in minute, but first I'll give you a little background on me and my experience level with dogs. I was born and raised here in Helena and I served my country in the US Navy for 24 years before retiring and coming back to live ~~here for good~~. Since I was 2 years old ~~growing up here in Helena~~, and throughout my life which has taken me to every corner of the world, I have either associated with, owned, rescued or cared for many, ~~many~~ dogs. Almost all have been what I would call, the "Powerful Breeds" to include Wymerhieners, German

Shepherds one of which was a former Navy Guard dog, Rotweillers and as HB191 puts it “pit bull dogs”. Currently I own three dogs, a boxer/Staffordshire cross my wife and I rescued 9 years ago, a Staffordshire/American Pit bull cross I’ve had for 4 years that my son gave to me, and the most recent addition was 3 months ago. I bought a Frenchton puppy that weighs all of 17 pounds for my wife on our wedding anniversary, who, I would like to add, was welcomed with open paws by my “pit bull dogs”. What’s the point you may be asking yourself? Simply this: first it qualifies me to speak about responsible ownership and secondly, it qualifies me to make this statement: Of all the Powerful Breed dogs I have encountered over the past 48 years, the “Pit Bull Dogs” have been the easiest to socialize, one of the easiest to train and by far have brought

more joy, laughter and clownsmanship into my home than any of the others. Now on to the issue.

I'm confused. I don't understand the problem I guess.

~~What I want to know~~ What I want to know, at some point...^{is} What in the world is the problem? What would provoke someone to write such an unconstitutional, biased, unfair and improper bill? ~~I really want to know. What is the real problem here?~~

Anyway, for whatever reason, this bill has been introduced
^{So,}
and is staring at us.....*whatever* the problem really is, Breed
Specific Legislature isn't the answer ---- why?

First and foremost – it is unconstitutional – the Montana
Constitution says that we are born free and have certain
inalienable rights to include acquiring, possessing and

protecting property. *In enjoying these rights all persons recognize corresponding responsibilities. Did you get that? RECOGNIZE CORRESPONDING*

RESPONSIBILITIES! ~~Right, fitting and proper? I think so~~

That falls on us humans, not our dogs. I didn't serve my country for 24 years just because, I served because I believe in ^{4/2}~~those~~ rights and they must be protected! This bill serves to undermine the very principals that our own Montana constitution sets forth. It's plain - - - insulting I guess would be the word.

Number 2. BSL laws are unfair to responsible owners like myself. You get that, UNFAIR....*balanced* "Pit bull" dogs are taken and euthanized while the unbalanced dog down the street, regardless of his breed, continues to run amuck,

bark uncontrollably and bite people and other animals.

What? *Right, fitting and proper?* I do not think so.

Number 3. I reiterate, NO MATTER WHAT THE PROBLEM IS, ~~(by the way, what is the problem?)~~ BSL DOESN'T FIX IT. Money, money, money --- BSL costs hundreds of thousands of taxpayer dollars, for what? For nothing! It's next to impossible to enforce and it doesn't fix the problem, (whatever the problem really is).....by the way, ^{what is the problem} I'm still not sure. In one county, you get that, one COUNTY IN MARYLAND, IT COST THE TAX ^{there} PAYERS OVER HALF A MILLION DOLLARS TO TRY AND ENFORCE BSL.....did it work? NO! it did not work....more importantly, it WILL NOT WORK. *Right, fitting and proper?* I don't think so, our tax dollars could be much more wisely spent on irresponsible pet owners and

a MULTITUDE of other more beneficial endeavors than this.

Number 4 – The “grandfather clause” I’ve heard a lot of why should you worry...there’s a grandfather clause....why? I’ll tell you why, first off, the clause is prejudicial. First, I have to tag him with a special PIT Bull tag....more money spent by the state there.....second, while I’m walking him he has to be leashed, not a problem there, but *also* has to be muzzled....WHAT?? My balanced “PIT BULL” dog has to be muzzled, but the unbalanced dog, regardless of his breed, down the street will STILL continue to run amuck, bark uncontrollably and bite. Plus, I can only hope for longevity in my life, which means that chances are, I’ll probably outlive both the “Pit Bull Dogs” I

own now.....oh, so guess what, now that they've passed on, I am PROHIBITED from acquiring another one. *Right fitting and proper?* I don't think so! Unconstitutional, prejudicial and immoral. I hope to God, that I did not serve my country for 24 years, and all people who serve in whatever capacity to protect our inalienable rights for this kind of treatment back from my own government. In fact, we served to protect those rights, not abolish them.

At the beginning I asked you to remember three words, I hope you all do remember them....and when it comes time to vote on this piece of work that is called HB191, that you'll ask yourself ONE, SIMPLE QUESTION – IS THIS RIGHT, FITTING AND PROPER? To me the answer is simple.....no.....
VOTE NO!
Thank you again. By the way, ~~what is~~

Representative Driskoll, *what is the problem?*

Points to Address:

1) Breed-Specific laws are not the best way to protect communities. An owner intent on using his or her dogs for malicious purposes will simply be able to switch to another breed of dog and continue to jeopardize public safety. The list of regulated breeds or types could grow every year without ever addressing responsible dog ownership.

2) Breed-Specific laws are hard to enforce. Breed Identification requires expert knowledge of the individual breeds, placing great burden on local officials.

3) Breed-Specific Laws are unfair to responsible owners. (me!)

4) Breed-Specific Laws increase the costs for the community. Shelter costs for the community could rise as citizens abandon targeted breeds and adoptable dogs of the target dogs could be euthanized at the shelter.

5) Some communities have had their breed-specific laws overturned on constitutional grounds of due process. Because proper identification of what dogs would be included is difficult or impossible, the law may be deemed unconstitutionally vague.

6) Strongly enforced animal control laws (leash laws), generic guidelines on dealing with dangerous dogs and increased public education efforts to promote responsible dog ownership are all better ways to protect communities from dangerous animals.

7) Breed Specific Legislation is strongly opposed by the AKC, UKC, ADBA, the American Veterinary Medical Association, the National Animal Control Association, the ASPCA, and a host of national animal welfare organizations that have studied the issue and recognize that targeting breeds simply does not work.

American Kennel Club
United Kennel Club
American Dog Breeder Association
American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals